

Children's Behavioral Health Initiative
March 2001
KidCare Update

The KidCare report presented to the legislature in January has received much interest and attention, both nationally and here in Connecticut. Commissioners Ragaglia and Wilson-Coker have testified at numerous legislative hearings about KidCare in an effort to answer questions about the program and gain support among legislators.

The Department is now planning to roll out services on a regional basis, ensuring that each region as it is targeted for KidCare, has the full compliment of services necessary for success. This includes emergency mobile psychiatric units, care coordinators, additional extended day treatment services, in-home therapeutic services and mentoring. We hope to fund the first region by July 1, 2001, culminating with all regions being financed by July 2002. Ultimately, the Department's plans are contingent upon approval of the Governor's budget.

Together with the State Department of Education, DCF co-sponsored a day long conference on March 13 to introduce KidCare to local educators. Over 300 staff from local school systems attended to learn about our efforts in Connecticut and to listen to Dr. Lucille Eber, a special educator from Illinois who has successfully integrated a system of care approach into the public schools in her state. The conference closed with a challenge to educators to become involved in their local community collaboratives.

Many people have expressed confusion about what KidCare means for the children and families they serve. We are proposing to form a team of Regional Administrators, Mental Health Program Directors, and Central Office staff to allow for continuous update on KidCare so regional staff can be better informed about the details of actual practice

We look forward to an exciting legislative session and will keep you updated on the progress of KidCare.
